

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-24 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for processing string materials, particularly electric conductors, comprising:

at least one first string material guiding means by which the string material is conveyed to a processing means along at least one ~~first~~ path of movement;

at least one second string material guiding means arranged along said at least one path of movement between said at least one first string material guiding means and said processing means;

wherein said at least one first string material guiding means includes at least one first guiding element by which self-twisting of the string material about ~~the a~~ longitudinal axis thereof may at least be impeded;

wherein said second string material guiding means includes at least one second guiding element which can be rotated about a first axis and is provided at a given angle with regard to said at least one path of movement; and

wherein said at least one second string material guiding means further includes a drive means for rotating said at least one guiding element about said first axis.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said at least one first and/or second string material guiding element is a rotationally positioned body which can be rotated about a rotational axis thereof.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the a diameter of said at least one first and/or second guiding element changes along the said rotational axis of said first string material guiding means.

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in claim 2, ~~characterized in that the~~ wherein a diameter of said at least one first and/or second guiding element remains constant along the said rotational axis of said first string material guiding means.

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein said at least one the path of movement for the string material is determined by the a position of the said at least one first and/or second string material guiding means and particularly said at least one first and/or second the guiding elements relative to one other.

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein said at least one guiding element of said second string material guiding means is rotationally positioned about two axes.

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~second string material guiding means includes a body rotationally positioned about another axis and comprising at least one inlet and one outlet area in which the guiding element of said second string material guiding means is located~~ two axes of said one second guiding element enclose an angle ranging between 0° and 90°, preferably between 45° and 90°, and most preferably between 65° and 90°.

8. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein said ~~second axis of said body of said second string material guiding means is of an angle larger 0° with regard to said path of movement~~ at least one second string material guiding means includes a body rotationally positioned about said first axis and comprising at least one inlet and one outlet area in which said at least one second guiding element of said at least one second string material guiding means is located.

9. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that claim 1, wherein the angle between said first axis and said path of movement ranges between 0° and 90°, preferably between 0° and 25°, between 0° and 5° and is most preferably approximately 0°, said rotational axis of said at least one second guiding element is of an angle larger than 0° with regard to said at least one path of movement.

10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that claim 1, wherein the rotary movement of said rotationally positioned body of said second string material guiding means is effected by a drive means either continuously or intermittently, an angle between said first axis and said at least one path of movement ranges between 0° and 90°, preferably between 0° and 25°, between 0° and 5° and most preferably between 0°.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that claim 1, wherein said drive means is a motor, particularly an electric motor including a hollow shaft, or a motor including a belt drive, which is connected to said rotationally positioned body of said second string material guiding means by means of a coupling element, a rotary movement of said rotationally positioned body of said at least one second string material guiding means is effected by a drive means either continuously or intermittently.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein said first axis and said second axis of said second string material guiding means enclose an angle ranging between 0° and 90°, preferably between 45° and 90°, and most preferably between 65° and 90°. drive means is a motor, particularly an electric motor including a hollow shaft, or a motor including a belt drive, which is connected to said rotationally positioned body of said at least one second string materials guiding means by means of a coupling element.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the a distance between said inlet and/or outlet area of said at least one second string material guiding means and the respective said at least one first string material guiding means is changed either continuously or intermittently.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ claim 1, wherein a distance between the inlet area of said at least one second string material guiding means and said at least one first string material guiding means and the a distance between said outlet area of said at least one second string material guiding means and said at least one first string material guiding means is of a given ratio.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ claim 1, wherein an inner contour of said inlet and outlet area of said at least one second string material guiding means is, at least section-wise, substantially parallel to the a course of the at least one path of movement of the string material.

16. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein said at least one first and/or second string material guiding means, particularly said at least one first and/or second guiding elements, are made of at least one material from the group of materials including metals, metal alloys, plastics, fiber-reinforced plastics, carbon, cefflar, composite materials, synthetic and natural resins, optical fibers, etc.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ claim 1, wherein an angle between said at least one path of movement of the string material and said at least one guiding elements of said second string material guiding means can be changed.

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the~~ claim 1, wherein at least one said guiding element of said at least one second string material guiding means

includes a first rotationally positioned body comprising at least one inlet and one outlet area and further two other rotationally positioned inner guiding elements arranged within said first body.

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein said at least one path of movement of the string material is between said inlet and outlet of said second string material guiding means due to the arrangement of said inner guiding elements, wherein ~~the~~ said string material is conveyed in alternating manner either above or below ~~the~~ a preceding and following rotational axis of a guiding element.

20. A method for processing string materials, particularly electric conductors, comprising the following steps:

- Conveying ~~the~~ a string material along at least one ~~first~~ path of movement to a processing means;
- Impeding self-twisting of ~~the~~ said string material about the longitudinal axis thereof by means of at least one first guiding element of a first string material guiding means;
- Processing ~~the~~ said string material by means of at least one second guiding element of a second string material guiding means which may be rotated about a first axis and may be of a given angle together with said at least one path of movement.

21. (Currently Amended) The method for processing string materials as set forth in claim 20, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said second string material guiding means includes a drive means for rotating ~~the~~ said at least one second guiding element about said first axis.

22. (Currently Amended) The method for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein said at least one second guiding element of said second string material guiding means is rotated either continuously or intermittently.

23. (Currently Amended) The method for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ the claim 1, wherein said rotation of said at least one second guiding element of said second string material guiding means is controlled in dependency of a conveying speed of the string material and/or a given backtwisting of ~~the~~ said string material by means of a subsequently following process step.

24. (Currently Amended) The method for processing string materials as set forth in ~~at least one of the preceding claims, characterized in that~~ the claim 1, wherein a distance between said first string material guiding means and said second string material guiding means is changed either continuously or intermittently.